Of Bitten Lips and Broken Hands

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Of Bitten Lips and Broken Hands

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Summary

Sometimes when the fancy strikes him, like now, Will wonders how he would display Hannibal.

Notes

For the prompt "Sounders of Three" on my hannibal bingo card. With this, and more than a year later, I've finally completed a bingo

The moon is high in the sky and Will can't sleep. He watches Hannibal instead. The softness of him in sleep, sprawled next to him. Will thinks of how easy it would be to snap Hannibal's neck. Hannibal would let him.

Sometimes when the fancy strikes him, like now, he wonders how he would display Hannibal.

The Ripper killed in sounders of three. A quick succession of dramatic tableaux, and then silence. Of course now Will was aware that it didn't mean that Hannibal stopped killing. Only that he didn't display them.

Will's sounder on the other hand stretched over a long period of time. It began with Garett Jacob Hobbs and seven bullets, his hands bathed in crimson as he tried desperately to quench the blood flowing from Abigail's throat.

He didn't manage to do it then, he didn't manage to do it in Hannibal's kitchen either.

It was messy. It was brutal and unrefined. There was no artistry there. Only butchery. Nothing like the gift Hannibal had left him earlier. Field kabuki, Will had called it derisively. Flamboyant, stylised. Exaggerated. Exquisitely staged. Even now he wonders how anyone could doubt that Hannibal was the copycat. Will still remembers the red of her blood, shockingly bright against her skin and the antlers, like a crimson makeup stroke on the white canvas of an actor's face.

Will wants to kiss Hannibal's and bite his lips until he can recreate the perfect shade of red. His fingers hoover over the slumbering beast instead. Not quite touching. He doesn't want to wake Hannibal up after all.

Will's second victim was Randall Tier. To this day he felt no remorse. Randall had wounded Buster and invaded his home. The offence was punishable by death. Where Hannibal staged tableaux only partially related to the victims, except when he wanted the FBI, *Will* , to see something, the nature of the transgression was at the heart of Will's own tableaux.

Randall wanted to be a beast, a dream only realised thanks to the ingenuity of men he so despised. In life, he couldn't be the animal he wanted to be. In death, he was even less so. In life, like Donkey Skin, Randall had hidden his human face under the skin of a long dead beast. In death, Randall's human face and limbs were now grotesquely exposed, an ill-fitted suit stretched thin over bones that weren't his own.

Will had made sure that the spine and torso of the beast's skeleton were not covered by any of Randall's body parts, the ill-fitted skin, finally displayed for the world to see.

The firefly man wasn't part of his sounder. Will hadn't killed the man, and his display, albeit baroque and grandiose, wasn't about him. Will was but a witness to a long ago tragedy. Nothing he could do would change the past. There was no light to guide Hannibal's steps back home. Will created his own, from the man that took Hannibal's, knowing that the latter would never see it.

He hadn't told Hannibal about it. But if he did, he would tell him about it now, in the soft light of the moon, in the deepest part of the night when the rest of the world is asleep and the only ones to hear the secret are the wind and each other. It would be something sacred shared lips to lips. A confession that should not be allowed to escape.

His third was Dolarhyde, the Tooth Fairy, the Great Red Dragon. Even now the memory of this night makes his lips curl, the phantom taste of blood coating his tongue. He hadn't known what to do with Dolarhyde. Will didn't plan his displays like Hannibal did. He would let the pendulum swing and he would see. That was all.

Like Randall, Will had known Dolarhyde would die. Like Randall, he had tried to harm Will's family but he couldn't have predicted Molly. Molly had fooled all of them, never seeing past her soft face and blonde hair, failing to see the fierceness in her.

Francis had committed an even more grievous offence though. He thought he could replace Will in Hannibal's affection. He sought to be Hannibal's equal, to stand by his side, never realising he was only a pawn in this game. Such arrogance should not have been left unpunished.

And punished he had been. In a glorious symphony where everyone played their part to perfection: Jack, Alana, Hannibal, Freddie, Chilton, and Francis. Will had known since the

beginning when Jack had come to find him in the snow that it couldn't end any other way.

Will doesn't know much about the rules of writing music. But he has listened to Hannibal enough over the years to pick up a few things. If he had to describe the weeks and days leading up to the conclusion of his sounder, he would call it a symphony.

For now, the only music comes from Hannibal's even breathing in sleep. It's more beautiful than any of the pieces that Hannibal could compose, any opera he could drag Will to. Later, maybe when Hannibal wakes up, there will be another music, of shared breaths and bodies. Later. They have time for this. All the time in the world.

Will lays down again, next to Hannibal, feeling the soft bed sheets and the pillow under his chin, so close now he can feel Hannibal's breath on his face.

From the beginning Will knew that Francis was the only way Jack would agree to pull Hannibal out of Alana's care, out of his cell. With the Ripper behind plexiglas walls, the Great Red Dragon was Jack's new obsession.

It all escalated quickly, the first movement of the symphony. A quick and lively tempo. *Allegro* , *Will* , Hannibal would whisper, all too happy to correct him, always so quick to use Italian. Not that Will minded when Hannibal pressed these words into his skin, while Will's hands travelled over keys. Will shivers at the memories.

Then came the *adagio*. As they were finally alone between the woods and the sea, Will couldn't have dreamed of a better setting. Words had been meaningless by now. Their eyes had done all the talking, while their mouths had moved for their audience.

The bullet had marked the beginning of the third movement as it pierced glass and flesh, spilling red wine like blood. How they danced and leaped that night! Slashing, biting, gutting. The dragon never had a chance as it fell, defeated, on the patio's stones.

And finally, Will's sounder came to a conclusion, covered in blood, both his own and not, cradled in Hannibal's embrace as they fell.

It's only later, when their wounds had healed that he had seen his, *their* , final design. Great wings had unfurled behind the Dragon's back, the blood seeping through the cracks of the stones, painting a tableau more elegant than anything they could have planned.

It's beautiful , Will had whispered against Hannibal's lips upon seeing it, repeating the words from that night like a prayer.

When Will opens his eyes in the moonlight again, leaving his memories to rest, Hannibal's eyes are open too. He's smiling, eyes and mouth soft, fingertips brushing Will's where his hand lays between them.

"It's such a beautiful night, Will. What thoughts occupy your mind?"

"Beauty," Will whispers, settling himself even closer to Hannibal, until there's virtually no space between them at all.

He knows Hannibal will understand. Their thoughts often run parallel now. The smile that tugs at the line at the corners of Hannibal's mouth and eyes is answer enough.

"The sight of you, black in the moonlight, is something I will carry with me always."

Hannibal is the one to close the gap between them, bringing his lips to Will's, feather light. It's not what Will wants right now. His hand snakes over Hannibal's hip and grips him hard. He wants to leave an imprint, see the marks tomorrow when the sun will shine and Will can drink in the sight of them.

He wants to rake his nails down the slope of Hannibal's back, leaving lines of red in their wake, a mirror of the two raised lines that adorn Hannibal's wrists forever. He wants to taste blood and paint Hannibal with it until he can bring to the surface the primal god that dwells under his human skin.

And lucky him, Hannibal obliges him, rolling them over, deepening the kiss until it's not chaste anymore, until all of Will's senses are overwhelmed and all he can see and hear and feel is the blood red of their union, teeth clashing, hands brutal, bodies joining in heat and fire.

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